

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME  
RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT  
(INTERIM)  
of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH  
(W. F. Young, M.B., D.P.H.)  
FOR THE YEAR 1941.

The Chairman and Members of the Newcastle-under-Lyme  
Rural District Council.

Gentlemen,

Ministry of Health Circular 2604 of March, 1942, required that Annual Reports of Medical Officers of Health for 1941 should be on similar lines to those laid down for 1939 and 1940. The Circular also requested that, on grounds of national security, certain statistics and other information should not be published.

The above requirements have been complied with in the restricted form of Report which I now have the honour to present to the Council.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

(Signed) W.F. YOUNG,

July, 1943.

Medical Officer of Health.

SECTION A.

Statistics and Social Conditions in the Area

Registrar-General's estimate of resident population, mid-1941	.. .. .	Withheld
Approximate number of inhabited houses in the Area	.. .. .	Withheld
Rateable Value, April 1942	.. .. .	£57,314
Sum represented by a penny rate	.. .. .	£219

	England and Wales	Newcastle-under-Lyme R. D.
Birth Rate	14.2	Withheld
Death Rate	12.9	11.3 <sup>x</sup>
Infantile Mortality Rate	59	38.5

<sup>x</sup> Comparability Factor suspended.

Table 1 makes comparison between the incidence of (a) maternal mortality in the District and in England and Wales as a whole, and (b) of the incidence of puerperal fever and puerperal pyrexia.

Table 1.

(a)	England and Wales	Newcastle-under- Lyme R. D.
<u>Maternal Mortality*</u>		
Puerperal Infection	0.48	0.00
Other Causes	1.75	0.00
Total	2.23	0.00

(b)		
<u>Notifications*</u>		
Puerperal Fever )		
Puerperal Pyrexia )	11.91	0.00

\* Rates per 1,000 total births (live and still).

#### SOCIAL CONDITIONS

There was no evidence that the War had had any harmful effect on the general health of the population.

In my capacity of Assistant County Medical Officer of Health and School Medical Inspector I had ample opportunities during the year of studying the health of children of all ages up to fourteen years. Generally speaking it may be said that their health continued to improve, and that there was no evidence that rationing of articles of food was attended by any undesirable results.

The issue of National Dried milk, fruit juices, and cod liver oil, to children of less than five years of age was carried out by the staff of the District Food Officer at Centres throughout the District. The arrangements made were most efficient and worked very smoothly.

The County Council scheme for the provision of milk at schools continued to prove highly beneficial. Canteens for the provision of mid-day meals for school children were in operation at two schools, and there was ample evidence that this provision was of great value. The extension of similar arrangements to a number of other schools in the District would meet a long-felt need.

Evacuees. At mid-year there were about 425 official evacuee children in the District, but by the end of the year about 100 of these had returned home. The improvement in the mental and physical condition of a large proportion, which was very marked in some cases, was maintained. Cleanliness was of a quite satisfactory standard, and much credit is due to the adoptive parents for the care and attention they bestowed.



## SECTION B.

### General Provision of Health Services in the Area

There is no change to record in the provision detailed in previous Reports, and during the year there was no change in personnel.

## SECTION C.

### Sanitary Circumstances of the Area

#### Water.

Supplies generally continued to be satisfactory as to quality, and although the position with regard to quantity was not free from anxiety, no actual shortage occurred. Towards the end of the year leaflets and posters emphasising the need for care in use were distributed.

Chlorination was referred to in my Report for 1940. The plant at Audley Water Works had been put into commission by the end of the year.

Six samples from various sources of supply were submitted for analysis and all were of a high standard of purity.

#### Drainage and Sewerage.

There was no change to report during the year.

#### Sanitary Inspection.

As a result of war-time conditions the amount of work unconnected with sanitary matters which was imposed on the Sanitary Inspector's Department continued to increase. Routine inspection in consequence had again practically to be abandoned and attention confined to urgent matters.

## SECTION D.

### Housing.

Shortage of building materials and labour accounted for difficulty in carrying out general repairs. Urgent matters such as the repair of roofs were attended to under certificates from the Regional Ministry of Health.

There was evidence that overcrowding tended rather to increase. About twenty cases came to notice, most of which were due to the incursion of Royal Ordnance Factory employees and land workers. In no case was overcrowding found to be serious. Abatement was not found possible in the majority of the cases.

Housing shortage was remedied to a minor extent by the re-conditioning of a few condemned houses.

## SECTION E.

### Inspection and Supervision of Food.

A small quantity of food, mainly tinned, had to be destroyed. About half a dozen cases of unsatisfactory milk supply were brought to the attention of the Department by outside Authorities. It was found possible to deal with all these by visit and advice

## SECTION F.

### Notifiable Infectious Disease.

The following Table shows the numbers of cases notified during the last three years.

Table 2.

	<u>1939</u>	<u>1940</u>	<u>1941</u>
Scarlet Fever	33	24	6
Diphtheria	1	2	3
Whoopingcough <sup>*</sup>	1	19	52
Measles <sup>*</sup>	2	73	345
Erysipelas	7	9	2
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	2	4	1
Pneumonia <sup>±</sup>	7	26	21
Cerebro-spinal Fever	0	3	0 <sup>**</sup>
Smallpox	0	0	0
Typhoid Fever	0	0	0
Paratyphoid Fever	0	0	3
Puerperal Pyrexia	2	0	0
Acute Anterior Polio-myelitis	0	0	1

<sup>\*</sup> Became notifiable in October, 1939.

<sup>±</sup> Notifiable cases only.

<sup>\*\*</sup> One non-notified fatal case occurred.

Table 3.

### Deaths from Infectious Diseases.

#### (a) Notifiable cases

Scarlet Fever ... 0. Diphtheria ... 0. Whoopingcough ... 0.  
 Measles ... 1. Cerebro-spinal Fever ... 1. Acute Anterior  
 Polio-myelitis ... 1. Pneumonia, (Notifiable and Non-  
 Notifiable) ... 4.

#### (b) Non-Notifiable Cases.

Influenza ... 8. Diarrhoea (children under two years of  
 age) ... 2.

A Table was prepared comparing the incidences and death-rates of certain notifiable infectious diseases in England and Wales as a whole and in Newcastle-under-Lyme Rural District.



In accordance with the Ministry of Health's requirements referred to on page one, these figures have been withheld from the Report, but it may be said that the general incidence of and mortality from these diseases in the District compared very favourably with those for England and Wales as a whole.

#### Diphtheria.

The incidence remained very low and there were no fatal cases.

A comparatively large number of children completed courses of immunisation during the year, the numbers being as follows:-

<u>1-5 years of age</u>	<u>5-14 years of age</u>	<u>Total</u>
363	713	1076

The estimated percentages of children who had received courses of immunisation by the end of the year were as follows:-

<u>1-5 years</u>	<u>5-15 years</u>
45%	38%

Attention was mainly concentrated on children of the more susceptible ages, viz. 1-9 years.

Among children up to the age of fifteen one case of diphtheria was notified during the year. The offer of immunisation for this case had been refused by the parents.

#### Enteric Fever.

Three apparently un-connected cases of paratyphoid B occurred in July and August. Their origin was not discovered. Diagnosis was made in each of them by the Widal reaction. Several examinations were made of the urine and faeces of all, and of several contacts, but paratyphoid B bacilli were discovered in none of the specimens. Strict precautions were taken with regard to two contacts who were employed in food distribution. One patient had been employed in the canteen at a Royal Ordnance Factory. This patient was isolated until several negative results of examination of the excretions had been obtained.

#### Scabies.

The Scabies Order, 1941, came into force on October 28th, 1941.

Arrangements were at once made with regard to the ascertainment of cases, and information was sought from local doctors, health visitors and district nurses, head teachers of schools, school clinics and infant welfare centres. A few cases had come to notice by the end of the year.

The question of treatment of families at a projected centre in Stoke-on-Trent was considered, but much difficulty was met with in connection with the transport of cases, and the scheme had to be abandoned. For the time being therefore arrangements were made whereby cases that came to knowledge were referred to their own doctors for treatment.

The Council has no disinfection plant, but arrangements already existed whereby articles of clothing, bedding, etc. could be treated at the infectious disease hospital in a neighbouring District. These arrangements were made use of in a few instances.

## TUBERCULOSIS.

The numbers of new cases notified and coming to knowledge otherwise than by notification were as follows:-

<u>Notifications etc.</u>	<u>1939</u>	<u>1940</u>	<u>1941</u>
Pulmonary	15	18	9
Non-Pulmonary	3	7	6

### Deaths

Pulmonary	7	6	5
Non-Pulmonary	0	1	0

Causes of death during the year.

Withheld.

.....